



United States Attorney District of New Jersey

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MAGNOLIA, NEW JERSEY MAN SENTENCED TO MORE THAN 64 YEARS IN PRISON FOR ARMED BANK ROBBERIES

TRENTON, N.J. – A Magnolia, New Jersey man was sentenced today to 771 months in prison for committing three armed bank robberies in Ocean and Monmouth Counties, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Steven L. Baker, 40, was convicted in August of all six counts in an Indictment charging him with the armed bank robberies of the Investors Savings Bank in Lakewood, N.J., on September 24, 2009; the PNC Bank in Brick, N.J., on November 9, 2009; and the First Atlantic Federal Credit Union in Neptune, N.J. on January 13, 2010 – and the use of a firearm during each of those robberies. Chief United States District Judge Garrett E. Brown Jr., who presided over the trial, also imposed sentence today in Trenton federal court.

During the trial, the jury heard testimony and viewed evidence about how Baker and his co-conspirator, Deshawn Clayton, 33, of Ocean Grove, N.J., committed each of the robberies. Baker and Clayton entered each bank wearing masks and gloves to conceal their identities. Baker stayed in the lobbies of the banks with a pistol while Clayton vaulted the teller counters and looted money from the teller drawers. While Clayton was looting the teller drawers, Baker threatened bank employees in two of the three robberies, stating “It’s not your money, it ain’t worth dying for.” After each robbery, Baker and Clayton fled the banks in a getaway car.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Brown ordered Baker to serve five years of supervised release and to pay restitution in the amount of \$145,111 to the banks he robbed. Baker’s 771-month sentence consists of 87 month in prison for the three armed robberies and 684 months for the related firearms offenses – to run consecutively.

Clayton previously pleaded guilty to committing the armed robbery of the First Atlantic Federal Credit Union and is scheduled to be sentenced tomorrow. At sentencing, Judge Brown will take into account his conduct concerning all three robberies.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of the FBI’s Red Bank Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward in Newark; investigators with the Monmouth County Prosecutor’s Office, under the direction of Prosecutor Luis A. Valentin; Investigators from the Ocean County Sheriff’s Office, under the direction of Sheriff William L. Polhemus; and police officers with the Lakewood, Brick, and Neptune Township Police Departments, for the investigation leading to today’s sentence.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Harvey Bartle of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division in Trenton, and Ronald Chillemi of the Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: Robin Kay Lord, Esquire, Trenton, N.J.